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Uniform Legislation—Legislative activity in 1919 is an evident manifestation of the fact that, while states are, in general, somewhat slow in adopting the model uniform laws proposed by the national conference on uniform state legislation, there is a very definite trend towards the more widespread acceptance of some of the uniform laws. The advantages which result from the elimination of conflict of law and uncertainty of law in various jurisdictions by the actual unification of state statutory provisions even to the extent of the use of identical language in all laws, has been more fully realized, apparently, during the past four years, for the legislation of 1916-19 has included 100 (or nearly 40 per cent) of the 257 uniform laws which have been passed by the various states and territories since 1892.

Property laws, the negotiable and quasi-negotiable instrument laws particularly, have found the most ready acceptance, while laws of a more social and less economic nature—the various uniform marriage and divorce acts, for example—have not met with as great favor.

Of the thirteen different uniform laws which were enacted in twenty-three states in 1919, eleven were of a commercial nature. The exceptions were the law for the extradition of persons of unsound mind and the patriotic uniform flag law, concerning the mutilation or defacement of the national or state flag or other emblems authorized by law, and their use in advertising.

The total number of uniform laws which were adopted in the sessions of 1918-19 was 47, comparing favorably with the 53 laws enacted in 1916-17.

The negotiable instruments act, which is one of the best known of the uniform laws and one which has found ready acceptance, was adopted by Texas in 1919.¹ This act is now a law in forty-seven states, Georgia alone having failed to adopt it. In consequence, this law, originally proposed in 1896, has become in fact a uniform state law.

Similarly the warehouse receipts act has been so generally adopted that the law on that subject may well be considered uniform for all states. Idaho, Montana, Oklahoma and Texas² adopted the law in 1919. The Idaho law is styled the "bonded warehouse law," but the provisions of the uniform warehouse receipts law are definitely accepted by the act. A Georgia law of 1918³ provided for negotiable warehouse

¹ *Laws*, regular session, 1919, ch. 123.

² *Session Laws*, 1919, Idaho, p. 484; Montana, ch. 209; Oklahoma, p. 383; Texas, (regular session), ch. 126.

³ Georgia, *Session Laws*, 1918, p. 246.

receipts, but dealt with cotton warehouses only. There now remain but seven other states which have not accepted the provisions of the uniform law. These are Arizona, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Oklahoma and South Carolina.

The uniform sales act, first approved in 1906, found favor in four states, Idaho, Iowa, Oregon, and Tennessee,⁴ and twenty-two states now have this law.

The uniform bills of lading act was adopted by two more states, California⁵ and North Carolina. The California law is a substitute for the law of 1915 which had embodied the essential provisions of the model law. Twenty-one states have now unified their statutory provisions on this subject.

None of the other uniform laws which have been proposed have met with such widespread acceptance. The fraudulent conveyance act, however, which was first proposed in 1918, was immediately accepted in eight states,—Arizona, Delaware, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, South Dakota, Tennessee and Wisconsin.⁶ Similarly the conditional sales act, approved in 1918, was speedily adopted in five of the same states,—Arizona, Delaware, New Jersey, South Dakota and Wisconsin.⁷ The uniform flag act, proposed in 1917, was adopted in six states,—in Louisiana and Maryland in 1918, and in Arizona, Maine, Washington and Wisconsin in 1919,⁸ although the Wisconsin law does not follow the phraseology of the model act.

The uniform partnership act, which had been accepted in seven states in 1917, was adopted by four more states,—Virginia taking action in 1918, and Idaho, New Jersey and New York following in 1919.⁹ The limited partnership act was more popular, eight states adopting it in 1918–19, the Maryland and Virginia sessions of 1918

⁴ *Session Laws*, 1919: Idaho, p. 443; Iowa, p. 507; Oregon, p. 29; Tennessee, p. 303.

⁵ California, *Session Laws*, 1919, p. 762.

⁶ *Session Laws*, 1919: Arizona, p. 204; Delaware, p. 561; Michigan, p. 546; New Hampshire, ch. 63; New Jersey, p. 500; South Dakota, p. 203; Tennessee, p. 402; Wisconsin, ch. 470.

⁷ *Session Laws*, 1919: Arizona, p. 38; Delaware, p. 461; New Jersey, p. 461; South Dakota, p. 123; Wisconsin, ch. 672.

⁸ *Session Laws*, 1919: Arizona, ch. 8; Maine, ch. 156; Washington, ch. 107; Wisconsin, ch. 113.

⁹ *Session Laws*, Virginia, 1918, p. 541; Idaho, 1919, p. 493; New Jersey, 1919, p. 481; New York, 1919, p. 1162.

both accepting the act, and Idaho, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Tennessee and Wisconsin adopting it in 1919.¹⁰

Four other model uniform laws made somewhat more conservative progress. The uniform law for the extradition of persons of unsound mind was adopted by two states only,—by Maryland in 1918, and by Wisconsin in 1919.¹¹ The probate of foreign wills act was approved by the New York and Tennessee legislatures of 1919, and the cold storage law and the domestic acknowledgments act were also accepted in Tennessee.¹²

Tennessee adopted six uniform laws; Wisconsin, five; Idaho and New Jersey, four; Arizona and New York, three; Delaware, Maryland, South Dakota, Texas and Virginia, two; and in twelve other states one uniform law was passed.

Every state except Georgia and Oklahoma now has at least two of the uniform laws on their statute books. Thirty-seven uniform laws have been drafted and approved by the national conference, and of these twenty-seven have now been adopted in from one to forty-seven states. Wisconsin has twenty-one of these laws, Maryland and Massachusetts have twelve each, Illinois has accepted eleven, Michigan nine, and New York seven.¹³

If the present tendency is continued several more of these acts will soon become uniform state laws in fact as well as in name.

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¹⁰ *Session Laws*, Maryland, 1918, p. 664; Virginia, 1918, p. 564; Idaho, 1919, p. 474; Minnesota, 1919, p. 653; New Jersey, 1919, p. 471. New York, 1919, p. 1162; Tennessee, 1919, p. 343; Wisconsin, 1919, ch. 44.

¹¹ *Session Laws*, Maryland, 1918, p. 310; Wisconsin, 1919, ch. 277.

¹² *Session Laws*, 1919, New York, p. 921; Tennessee, pp. 139, 201, 296.

¹³ See Proceedings National Conference of Commissions on Uniform State Laws, Twenty-Ninth Annual Meeting, Boston, Mass., 1919; table opp. p. 160.